

# SA's first commercial-ready 5G network launched

South African operator rain and Nokia announced the launch of the country's first commercial-ready 5G network in Cape Town, following the deployment of the first 5G site last November. The achievement supports rain's goal to introduce 5G services at the earliest possible time in line with South Africa's vision to ensure a seamless information infrastructure by 2030 for an inclusive knowledge economy.



L to R (Back) Paul Harris, chairman of rain and Rajeev Suri, president and CEO of Nokia. (Front row) Brandon Leigh, director of rain and Amr K. El Leithy, head of the Middle East and Africa market, Nokia

In addition, Nokia and rain have agreed to collaborate on deploying the 5G network with Nokia's end-to-end 5G solutions including optical fronthaul transport products and its Fixed Wireless Access FastMile 5G Gateway. Nokia's FastMile 5G Gateway is a home solution that brings high speeds to homes using 3GPP compliant 5G New Radio.

The 5G network opens the door for new applications and services that rely on ultra-high speeds and ultra-low latency, such as virtual reality, augmented reality and artificial intelligence for improved education, healthcare, entertainment, and more.

The rollout will continue through 2020 to extend the network to more areas. Later this year the network will also support a variety of 5G use cases when commercial 5G end-user devices become available. This initiative paves the way for the introduction of 5G services in the entire country.

Willem Roos, chief executive officer at rain, said “Together with Nokia, we are busy building this country’s first 5G network within a challenging time frame to advance the rollout of 5G services. As ‘rain falls equally on everyone’, we relentlessly pursue providing affordable high-speed broadband to everyone in South Africa. With the 5G network, we will be able to achieve exactly this and be a catalyst for the socio-economic development in the country. Nokia is at the forefront of 5G technology globally and based on our experience we are confident that its end-to-end innovative products and world-class professional services will help us bring the best possible 5G network to the people of South Africa.”

Deon Geysler, head of the Southern Africa subregion at Nokia, said: “We are excited to support rain in its 5G vision. The 5G technology promises to play a crucial role in bridging the digital divide, which will help in the overall economic and social growth of the region. rain has taken the lead with the first launch of 5G network in South Africa. This will allow the company to launch new and innovative 5G use cases, attract new subscribers and improve its revenue.”

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